



Amended Paragraphs 20 and 21

20) While valve stop 32 and valve plate 34 are described herein as being located at “the extremities” 28 and 20 of valve stem 26, it will be apparent to the skilled artisan that the term extremity as used in this context is meant to indicate at or near the opposing ends of valve stem 26 and not necessarily at the very end thereof.

21) Depicted schematically in Figure 1, is a plenum 54 having a vacuum inlet 56. Apertures 58 in plenum 54 engage valve end 16 of corrugated cup 12 through the engagement of peripheral flange 62 with the periphery of aperture 58. As shown at the left of Figure 1, when no object to be lifted is present, corrugated cup 12 remains in its fully extended position, valve stem 26 with attached valve stop 32 remains in ~~[[it]]~~ its fully lowered position, valve stop 32 engages valve seat 22 and no vacuum can pass through valve end 16. Thus, if no product 50 contacts open end 14, no vacuum is allowed to escape through the vacuum cup assembly 10 of the present invention and only those assemblies 10 whose open ends 14 are contacted by product 50 are activated as described below. Upon contact of open end 14 with an object to be lifted 50, corrugated cup 12 collapses upward as shown at the right of Figure 1 due to upward pressure applied to open end 14 against object 50 by downward movement of plenum 54, or if desired by design, upward movement of product 50. In the case depicted at the right, upon the application of upward pressure to corrugated cup 12 (for the reason just described), valve stem 26 is also caused to travel upward resulting in the disengagement of attached valve stop 32 with valve

seat 22 thereby allowing vacuum from plenum 54 to pass through apertures 35 to tighten the “grip” of corrugated cup 12 on object 50. As an alternative, a small aperture 33, as shown in Figure 5, could be provided in valve stop 32 so that a slight vacuum is drawn inside of corrugated cup 12 at all times. In this case, the mere contact of object 50 with opening 14 draws these two elements together due to the slight vacuum being continuously applied inside of corrugated cup 12, resulting, as the vacuum from plenum 54 grows in corrugated cup 12, suitable displacement of valve stem 26 and associated valve stop 32.